

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

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AF:DBEASUM

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R 091334Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 117469

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, EFIN, NI (LEFEVRE, LOUIS)

SUBJECT: LEFEVRE CASE/AIG

1. WHITE AND CASE ATTORNEY BROWER CALLED ON AMBASSADOR EASUM MAY 5 TO REVIEW RECENT EVENTS IN LEFEVRE CASE AND TO ASK FOR EMBASSY'S INTERCESSION WITH INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE FOR THE PURPOSE OF OBTAINING A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT FREEING LEFEVRE OF CHARGES PENDING AGAINST HIM. ALTERNATIVELY, BROWER URGED WAY BE FOUND PERMITTING LEFEVRE TO DEPART NIGERIA AND TAKE UP NEW DUTIES IN MANILA PENDING RESOLUTION OF CASE. ALSO PRESENT WERE L/AF, CA/SCS, AND AF/W.

2. BROWER SAID AIG CONVINCED THAT DETENTION OF LEFEVRE IS FMG MEANS OF HARRASSMENT OF COMPANY (AIIC) TO SETTLE OUTSTANDING DIFFERENCES OVER "EXPROPRIATION" OF ITS SHARES. BROWER BELIEVES THAT THE EXPROPRIATION MATTER CAN BE PUT ASIDE FOR THE PRESENT SINCE SOME PROGRESS HAS
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BEEN MADE BUT THAT AIG DOES NOT WISH FMG TO BELIEVE IT IS CONCERNED EXCLUSIVELY WITH THE LEFEVRE CASE TO THE EXCLUSION OF SETTLEMENT OF THE EXPROPRIATION MATTER. AIG CLAIMS IF LEFEVRE CASE IS NOT SOON SETTLED, COMPANY WILL

PRESS FOR FULL COMPENSATION (I.E. WILL NOT SEEK COMPROMISE SOLUTION WITH FMG); EASUM CAUTIONED

AGAINST THIS LINE OF PURSUIT AND ADVISED THAT COMPANY TREAT EACH CASE AS A SEPARATE ISSUE. CONNECTING THE TWO, DECLARED EASUM, WOULD ONLY HARDEN THE FMG'S POSITION REGARDING AIG'S COMPROMISE PROPOSAL AND MIGHT PRODUCE ADDITIONAL OBSTACLES IN SECURING LEFEVRE'S RELEASE.

3. BROWER THEN REITERATED HIS ADVICE THAT THE MOST SATISFACTORY SOLUTION TO THE LEFEVRE CASE WOULD BE A "DISCRETIONARY DISMISSAL" RESULTING FROM A POLITICAL SOLUTION RATHER THAN A LEGAL SOLUTION. EASUM SAID EMBASSY WAS WILLING ASCERTAIN HOW ONE MIGHT GO ABOUT SEEKING SUCH DISMISSAL BUT INSISTED THAT NO RPT NO DECISION ON PURSUING SUCH A COURSE COULD BE TAKEN WITHOUT FURTHER STUDY.

4. BROWER THEN ASKED WHETHER EMBASSY WOULD APPROACH INSPECTOR GENERAL ALONG FOLLOWING LINES: ONE OPTION WOULD BE FOR FMG TO TAKE LEFEVRE'S WRITTEN TESTIMONY (PRESUMABLY TESTIMONY THAT WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO FMG'S CASE AGAINST EGBE, WHO APPEARS TO BE THE REAL TARGET OF GOVERNMENT'S INVESTIGATION) AND PERMIT LEFEVRE TO DEPART FROM NIGERIA. ANOTHER WOULD BE FOR LEFEVRE AND/OR AIG TO PROVIDE ASSURANCES TO FMG THAT LEFEVRE WOULD MAKE HIMSELF AVAILABLE (EITHER IN LAGOS OR AT ANY NIGERIAN EMBASSY) FOR WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN CONFIDENTIAL

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THE FUTURE. BROWER HOPES THAT EMBASSY WILL PRESENT THESE OPTIONS TO I-G RATHER THAN HAVE ROTIMI WILLIAMS DO THE SAME WITHIN THE CUSTOMARY LEGAL FRAMEWORK, WHICH BROWER BELIEVES WOULD UNNECESSARILY ENSNARL THE MATTER EVEN FURTHER IN JUDICIAL COMPLICATIONS. (AS EMBASSY IS AWARE, AIG STRATEGY IS TO AVOID PROLONGATION OF JUDICIAL CONSIDERATION OF CASE DUE TO ABSENCE OF FAITH IN THE SYSTEM). EASUM SAID THAT UPON RETURN TO POST HE WOULD BE WILLING TO APPROACH I-G ALONG ABOVE LINES INsofar AS THEY ARE CONSISTENT WITH NIGERIAN LAW. HE ADVISED BROWER SERIOUSLY TO CONSIDER AN EARLY RETURN TO LAGOS HIMSELF IN ORDER TO DEVELOP FURTHER TACTICS ON THE SPOT. VANCE

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